The examiner has rejected claims 1-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lyman in view of pages 2-11 of the specification of the application and Wright et al. The applicant respectfully traverses the examiner's rejection for the following reasons.

Neither Lyman, Wright et al., nor the other prior art teaches or suggests the formation of a two-piece breast prosthesis mold such that the resulting prosthesis is of uniform thickness and has a smooth exterior after it is turned inside out. Wright et al. teaches the action of turning a breast prosthesis inside out, but the prosthesis resulting from the Wright et al. process would necessarily be of uneven thickness and would have a rough exterior. As explained more fully at pages 2 and 5 of the specification for this application, the problem with the Wright et al. prosthesis is a result of using a one-piece mold. Wright et al. teaches the formation of a mold 14 that is then coated on its interior with latex rubber by "painting" the latex onto the mold 14 to form the prosthesis. (See col. 2, lines 44-52; Fig. 5.) The exterior of this prosthesis will be smooth because it is against the mold 14 interior, but the interior will be rough and the thickness of the prosthesis will be uneven as a result of the "painting" process. When the prosthesis is then turned inside out, the rough interior becomes the exterior. The result is a prosthesis with a rough exterior and uneven wall thickness.

By contrast to the Wright et al. process, the invention of amended claim 1 uses a two-piece mold such that both the interior and exterior walls of the prosthesis remain smooth, and the prosthesis wall is of uniform thickness. Turning the prosthesis inside out does not result in a prosthesis with a rough surface because the interior mold portion keeps the interior of the prosthesis smooth, which of course becomes the

exterior of the prosthesis after it is turned inside out. None of the prior art teach or suggest this process, which (as explained at page 5 in the specification) has several significant advantages over the prior art. In particular, a prosthesis of uneven thickness will tend to "balloon" at its thin points and will feel unnatural to the touch at its thicker points. Uniformity of thickness and smoothness is critical in producing a prosthesis with a natural look and feel, but such a prosthesis cannot be produced using any combination of the prior art teachings. The prior art, moreover, does not recognize the unique advantages of using a two-part mold to form a breast prosthesis as claimed in amended claim 1, and thus any combination of the cited prior art with teachings concerning two-part molds would be improper since the prior art contains no suggestion to combine prior art teachings in such a manner.

CONCLUSION

With the amendments made herein, the remaining claims should be allowable. Reconsideration and allowance of the claims is, therefore, respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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